

## Claims

What is claimed is:

Sub. a<sup>3</sup> 1. A system for positive-return gambling, comprising:

2 at least one token account for tracking tokens associated with a player;

3 a gambling game apparatus, coupled to the at least one token account,

4 configured to award tokens and to credit and debit the at least

5 one token account, the gambling game apparatus providing a

6 statistically positive token return to players; and

7 a token conversion module for converting tokens according to a token

8 value determined based on a total number of tokens in a set of

9 tokens.

1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the token conversion module comprises

2 a lottery module for randomly selecting at least one token from the set of tokens,

3 and awarding at least one predefined prize to a player whose account contains

4 the selected token.

1 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the token conversion module deter-

2 mines a cash value for each token by dividing a predetermined cash award by

3 the number of tokens in the set of tokens.

1           4. The system of claim 3, further comprising a payout module, coupled to  
2           the token conversion module, for paying at least a subset of the players the cash  
3           value of at least a subset of the tokens in the player's token account.

1           5. The system of claim 1, wherein the set of tokens comprises all tokens  
2           awarded to all players.

1           6. The system of claim 1, wherein the set of tokens comprises all tokens  
2           awarded within a defined time period.

1           7. The system of claim 1, further comprising an account initializer, cou-  
2           pled to the at least one token account, for awarding an initial quantity of tokens  
3           to each player.

1           8. The system of claim 1, wherein the token conversion module converts  
2           tokens at the expiry of a predetermined time period.

1           9. The system of claim 1, wherein the gambling game apparatus presents  
2           a gambling game to be played by a player, and credits and debits the player's to-  
3           ken account based on the play of the player.

1           10. The system of claim 9, wherein the gambling game comprises one se-  
2           lected from the group consisting of:

3 video poker;  
4 slot machine;  
5 blackjack;  
6 roulette;  
7 sports pool;  
8 sports book;  
9 keno;  
10 bingo; and  
11 solitaire.

1 11. The system of claim 9, wherein the gambling game comprises a casino  
2 game that is modified to increase payout sufficiently to provide a statistically  
3 positive return to players.

1 12. The system of claim 9, wherein the token conversion module converts  
2 tokens after a predetermined number of definable units of gameplay.

1 13. The system of claim 12, wherein each definable unit of gameplay com-  
2 prises a game.

1 14. The system of claim 1, wherein each token account is persistent over at  
2 least two gaming sessions.

1 15. The system of claim 1, wherein each token account expires after a pre-  
2 determined time period.

1 16. The system of claim 1, wherein the gambling game apparatus com-  
2 prises a network-enabled user interface for accepting input and providing output  
3 across a network.

1 17. The system of claim 16, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

1 18. The system of claim 1, wherein the gambling game apparatus com-  
2 prises an automated game machine.

1 19. The system of claim 1, wherein the gambling game apparatus com-  
2 prises a human dealer.

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Sub. a<sup>4</sup> 20. A method of providing positive-return gambling, comprising:  
2 awarding an initial quantity of tokens to at least one player;  
3 crediting and debiting at least one player with tokens responsive to the  
4 gameplay of the player in a gambling game, the gambling game  
5 providing a statistically positive token return to players; and  
6 converting tokens according to a token value determined based on a total  
7 number of tokens in a set of tokens.

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1           21. The method of claim 20, wherein converting tokens comprises ran-  
2       domly selecting at least one token from the set of tokens, and awarding at least  
3       one predefined prize to a player having the selected token.

1           22. The method of claim 20, wherein converting tokens comprises deter-  
2       mining a cash value for each token by dividing a predetermined cash award by  
3       the number of tokens in the set of tokens.

1           23. The method of claim 22, further comprising paying at least a subset of  
2       the players the cash value of at least a subset of the tokens in the player's token  
3       account.

1           24. The method of claim 20, wherein the set of tokens comprises all tokens  
2       awarded to all players.

1           25. The method of claim 20, wherein the set of tokens comprises all tokens  
2       awarded within a defined time period.

1           26. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of converting tokens is per-  
2       formed at the expiry of a predetermined time period.

1           27. The method of claim 20, wherein the gambling game comprises one  
2       selected from the group consisting of:

3 video poker;  
4 slot machine;  
5 blackjack;  
6 roulette;  
7 sports pool;  
8 sports book;  
9 keno;  
10 bingo; and  
11 solitaire.

1 28. The method of claim 20, wherein the gambling game comprises a ca-  
2 sino game that is modified to increase payout sufficiently to provide a statisti-  
3 cally positive return to players.

1 29. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of converting tokens is per-  
2 formed after a predetermined number of definable units of gameplay.

1 30. The method of claim 29, wherein each definable unit of gameplay  
2 comprises a game.

1 31. The method of claim 20, wherein tokens are persistent over at least  
2 two gaming sessions.

1 32. The method of claim 20, wherein tokens expire after a predetermined  
2 time period.

1 33. The method of claim 20, wherein the gambling game is implemented  
2 using a network-enabled user interface for accepting input and providing output  
3 across a network.

1 34. The method of claim 33, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

1 35. The method of claim 20, wherein the gambling game is implemented  
2 on an automated game machine.

1 36. The method of claim 20, wherein the gambling game is administered  
2 by a human dealer.

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Sub. 37. A computer-readable medium comprising computer-readable code for  
2 providing positive-return gambling, comprising:  
3 computer-readable code adapted to award an initial quantity of tokens to  
4 at least one player;  
5 computer-readable code adapted to credit and debit at least one player  
6 with tokens responsive to the gameplay of the player in a gam-

7                   bling game, the gambling game providing a statistically positive  
8                   token return to players, and  
9                   computer-readable code adapted to convert tokens according to a token  
10                  value determined based on a total number of tokens in a set of  
11                  tokens.

1                  38. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the computer-  
2                  readable code adapted to convert tokens comprises computer-readable code  
3                  adapted to randomly select at least one token from the set of tokens, and award  
4                  at least one predefined prize to a player having the selected token.

1                  39. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the computer-  
2                  readable code adapted to convert tokens comprises computer-readable code  
3                  adapted to determine a cash value for each token by dividing a predetermined  
4                  cash award by the number of tokens in the set of tokens.

1                  40. The computer-readable medium of claim 39, further comprising com-  
2                  puter-readable code adapted to pay at least a subset of the players the cash value  
3                  of at least a subset of the tokens in the player's token account.

1                  41. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the set of tokens  
2                  comprises all tokens awarded to all players.



1           42. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the set of tokens  
2 comprises all tokens awarded within a defined time period.

1           43. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the computer-  
2 readable code adapted to convert tokens operates at the expiry of a predeter-  
3 mined time period.

1           44. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the gambling  
2 game comprises one selected from the group consisting of:

3           video poker;

4           slot machine;

5           blackjack;

6           roulette;

7           sports pool;

8           sports book;

9           keno;

10          bingo; and

11          solitaire.

1           45. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the gambling  
2 game comprises a casino game that is modified to increase payout sufficiently to  
3 provide a statistically positive return to players.

1           46. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the computer-  
2 readable code adapted to convert tokens operates after a predetermined number  
3 of definable units of gameplay.

1           47. The computer-readable medium of claim 46, wherein each definable  
2 unit of gameplay comprises a game.

1           48. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein tokens are per-  
2 sistent over at least two gaming sessions.

1           49. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein tokens expire af-  
2 ter a predetermined time period.

1           50. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the gambling  
2 game is implemented using a network-enabled user interface for accepting input  
3 and providing output across a network.

1           51. The computer-readable medium of claim 50, wherein the network  
2 comprises the Internet.

1           52. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the gambling  
2 game is implemented on an automated game machine.